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'LA PATRIE.'

'The People,' a small work by M. Michelet, is likely to become well known amongst us, since two translations of it have already appeared. It is full of the most singular egotisms both as to the author and the author's country—worth reading, for the stirring and occasionally fine thoughts scattered through it; yet, on the whole, of a mischievous character. We should not have thought of mentioning M. Michelet or his book, but for its extravagant samples of the sentiment called Love of Country. Had any one wished to caricature this sentiment, he could hardly have employed more suitable terms than this clever French historian. We find him, for instance, proclaiming that nationality is 'the life of the world—without which all would be dead.' nationality is only now come to a true maturity in France and England, on the provincial nationalities ceasing to exist. The feeling of native country is the last to die. 'I have found it,' says he, 'in the dead!' Amongst the most depraved, there was always one moral spark surviving—it was France! 'France,' in short, 'is a religion!' One of the most essential parts of the education of a young Frenchman is this:—On a great public festival, his father 'takes him from Notre Dame to the Louvre, the Tuilleries, the Triumphal Arch. From some roof or terrace he shows him the people, the army passing, the bayonets clashing and glittering, and the tricoloured flag. In the moments of expectation especially, before the fête, by the fantastic reflections of the illumination, in that awful silence which suddenly takes place in that dark ocean of people, he stoops towards him, and says, "There, my son; look, there is France—there is your native country! All this is like one man—one soul, one heart. They would all die for one; and each man ought also to live and die for all. Those men passing yonder, who are armed, and now departing, are going away to fight for us. They leave here their father, their aged mother, who will want them. You will do the same. You will never forget that your mother is France." . . . It is truly grand for the Frenchman to have here the glorious and immortal *Patrie* gathered in one point, with all ages, all places together; and to follow from the *Thermes de César* to the *Colonne*, to the *Louvre*, to the *Champ-de-Mars*—from the *Arc de Triomphe* to the *Place de la Concorde*—the history of France and the world!'

M. Michelet, in another part of his book, details symptoms of decline in France, and the embarrassed and distressed state of the various classes of people. He is full of fury at all other nations, as if any prosperity they enjoy were at her expense. 'Children, children, I

say unto you'—so he bursts out—'climb up a mountain, provided it be high enough; look to the four winds, you will see nought but enemies!'

How comes it that one never hears a man speak high words about his native country, but bayonets and gunpowder are sure to be in the immediate neighbourhood? How comes it that this so-called affection should always betray itself chiefly in some bravadoing, defying, destruction-breathing language towards the other inhabitants of the earth? Why cannot a man love a certain piece of the geographical surface, except on the condition of his regarding all the unfortunate people who live elsewhere with a mixture of hatred and contempt? Or, why should there be such an association of ideas amongst us, that we are most disposed to think of our native country when we survey the ranks of her soldiery—the enginery which she forms in confession of either a desire to fall foul of other countries, or a dread of being fallen foul of by them? These are questions which I do not recollect ever seeing asked before; but it is not the less proper that they should be asked now. There is the more necessity, considering the esteem in which the sentiment stands in our moral codes, that we should at length challenge a thing of such ominous associations. For surely it is starting to find the people who are the most replete with this feeling, the first to acknowledge that all other peoples are their enemies. What is it, we must ask, that makes Frenchmen of the Michelet stamp regard their peaceable neighbours in this light? What can it be, but that they entertain selfish feelings about their own country, and consequently feel that others ought to regard it as an enemy?

The fact is, that though it may seem theoretically possible to entertain love of country as a pure and harmless feeling, it is seldom practically exemplified, except in connexion with some spirit of hatred towards other countries, or in a selfish regard to certain local interests. Sound it thoroughly, and it will usually be found not to consist of such a love for fatherland as one feels for a natural father, not a result merely of pleasant associations regarding a piece of ground which we have been familiar with since infancy, but an unreasoning prejudice, springing from the selfish propensities—a compound of self-esteem, acquisitiveness, and unmeaning odiums. It is not, therefore, wonderful that nations much under the influence of this spirit should wither, and feel cause to complain. They only suffer under the decree which has been passed in the councils of the Almighty against the centripetal or selfish spirit, under whatever form, or upon whatever scale, it may be manifested.

It would be well if, all over the earth, we were to come to the naked truth on this subject. That truth appears to be, that round the central point—the man himself—there is a series of concentric circles marking

his immediate family—his clan, town, or province—his country—which are liable to become objects of the selfish and exclusive affections in diminishing degrees: that is to say, he first loves his family against all other families; then he loves his clan or province against all other clans and provinces; finally, he loves his country against all other countries. In his general moral progress, or as he advances in civilisation, he passes from narrow to more spacious circles of partiality. It is something to see him sacrifice the family exclusivism to the clan exclusivism, or the love of his village; it is more to see him give up the clan, or village, or province exclusivism, for the more abstract and generous feeling in behalf of his country. Still, all are but grades in barbarism; for all of them indicate a merely instinctive acting, apart from both reason and the higher moral feelings. Does any one doubt this? Will he, then, adduce me a single instance not merely of one clansman being just in judgment towards another, but of a lover of his country even pretending to consider what was due to the people of another country—generously admitting their merits, entering kindly into their interests, and fulfilling towards them the great moral maxim, applicable to all the children of the earth, of doing in regard to them as he would be done by? Was there ever a Campbell of old conscientious to a Gordon, or a Tuscan to a Ferrarese? Forty years ago, when we heard more of love of country than we do now, was there a single Englishman disposed to admit that the French were exactly human beings like ourselves? Is it not invariably found, that just in proportion as this affection is warmly felt, so is there a blindness to the good that is in other countries and other peoples—a diabolical and hatred for these peoples—and, in extreme cases, a disposition to cut their throats? Now, surely if a thing be good, it should be presentable in the light of reason, and of the just and kindly feelings. But not one particle of reason, or conscientiousness, or true impartial and diffusive benevolence, was ever found in connexion with this sentiment in its ordinary forms. A man tells me, with the greatest complacency, I am for England against all the world; thinking, apparently, he is saying something extremely noble, when in reality he is only telling me that he would embrace or grasp an advantage for England to the injury of all other countries; that he would support it in any selfishness against other countries; that he would defend and support it in any error it might fall into against neighbouring states; and so forth. So it always is—always there is some horrible injustice, or antipathy, or butchery contemplated, when we hear of this same love of country. It has been seen in the universal rapine of Rome; in the grasping commercial policy of modern nations; in the endless, aimless, sanguinary wars of all times. *La Patrie* was the sanction of the atrocious policy of a Bonaparte. It is, in the case of France, the source of uneasy feeling to all Europe, and a reason for universal soldiering and fortifying at this day. Never do we hear of a noble act of generosity or justice between nation and nation in connexion with this sentiment. What pretension, then, can it have to the good esteem in which it is usually held? Is it not, on the contrary, deserving of all the reprobation due to the selfish and outrageous acts to which it habitually gives rise? And would it not everywhere receive this reprobation, if there were a sufficient number exempt from its guilt to form a pure tribunal for its arraignment?

It will not, however, be so always; but precisely as men have been able to conquer the partiality for the name of Macpherson as against that of Mackenzie, or for the province of Wales as against England, will they be in time able to feel at one with a people called the

French, or a state called Russia. They will find it possible to tread the beautiful land they live in, rejoicing in all that is goodly and of good report belonging to it, and solicitous to promote its true and righteous interests, without feeling one particle of jealousy or hatred towards any other country; but, on the contrary, eager also to promote the interests, and make handsome admission of the deservings, of all the neighbouring portions of the great family of man. It will then be discovered that, even as the individual, so may the collective unity called a nation, best seek happiness by endeavouring to promote it in others; true joy being ever a reflected light. It will be found that one commercial kindness thrown out to a neighbour, even at what may appear a sacrifice of immediate interests, will give ten times more safety than twenty times the equivalent in money spent in that loathsome barbarism of our age—Armed Precaution. International civilities will be as common as civilities between neighbours in a street, and will be as effectual in promoting peace and good-will. Then it will become as great an absurdity to think of war between England and France, as it would now be to think of it taking place between Yorkshire and Durham. Such and so mighty must be the effects of our passing in moral development from the narrow circles in which we still confine our affections, to that wider sweep and range which it is part of our professed religion to hold as realisable, and without which being attained, indeed, our religion can never be considered as in full practical operation. May the day of all these blessed experiences be at hand!

THE WORK-GIRL.

WORK!—what extremes in human life are suggested by this little monosyllable! What varied interpretations may be placed on this one short word! And how differently is it considered in each circle through which we might trace its universal application, from the light and elegant occupation of affluence, downwards to the toilsome drudgery of necessity! One picture gives us the fair and accomplished daughters of our land seated before their embroidery-frames, surrounded by colours as bright as the rainbow's hues—worsted, and silk, and golden threads, scattered in rich profusion, with every accessory to interest and amuse; but before the leaf, or the flower, or the cunning device is half copied on the canvas, some anxious parent or careful friend will approach, and in tones of fond intreaty request they will lay it aside, lest the graceful figure should be injured, or the radiant eyes made dim, by work! And this, again, is the term to designate the employment that has hollowed the cheek and chilled the life-blood of the weary occupants of many a solitary garret, who, sighing, listen to the midnight chime, and think that even then they cannot lay it by to rest. Such are the extremes. Would that neither boundary was so strongly marked, and that a little habitual self-denial in the one instance, might afford means to lessen the privations of the other! When Lord Collingwood wrote home, enjoining his wife to inspire his daughters with 'a contempt for vanity and embroidery,' it might almost be imagined that the gallant admiral had a prophetic glimpse of the expenditure of time and money lavished by the present generation on this fascinating pursuit. But it is the abuse, not the use of anything which renders it reprehensible; and we may remember it was a saying of the sagacious Dr Johnson, that many a man might have escaped hanging, had he known how to hem a pocket-handkerchief. Let our fair country women, then, enjoy this recreation as a recreation, not as an all-engrossing pursuit; and let us all, both men and women, feel thankful that the needle has provided an antidote

against listlessness in one class, and a means of livelihood for another.

A lady was lately making some purchases in the principal shop of a little sea-side village in the south of Ireland. As usual, it was a place where the most incongruous articles were collected, and, accordingly, frequented by purchasers as different as there were varieties in the inhabitants of the village; besides which, on the weekly market-day, it was so crowded from morning till night by an influx of country customers, as to render it a matter of some difficulty to reach the counter. The lady, however, was a person of some importance, and way was made for her as soon as she appeared, while the obsequious shopman threw everything else aside to attend to her commands. They were not very important; and having soon despatched them, she was waiting for the change of a note, when she became aware of a gentle pulling at the back of her dress, two or three times repeated, and so far different from the occasionally rude pressure of the crowd, as at last to attract her attention. She turned, and saw two young girls immediately behind her, both of whom coloured deeply as she looked round: one, very small and delicate-looking, drew back timidly; but the other, a tall, handsome girl, raised her eyes ingenuously, though respectfully, to those of the lady, and in gentle accents apologised for the liberty they had taken. 'But my sister, ma'am,' added she, 'is very sickly, and her only pleasure is in work; and when she saw the trimming on your dress, she thought it so pretty, that I could not help drawing it a little nearer for her to see.'

Before she had concluded the sentence, her companion had again glided forward, her dark eyes glistening, and slipping her hand into that of her courageous defender, added earnestly, 'Forgive us both, ma'am.' The lady, whom we shall call Mrs Villars, much struck by the little scene, reassured them speedily with one of her own sweet smiles, and stooping down, unclasped her mantle, and showed them, to their hearts' content, the dress they had admired so much; then gathering up her little purchases, she returned their energetic gratitude and admiration with another smile, and left the shop.

Days passed away, and she saw the sisters no more; but they often returned to her thoughts, and, unbidden by any similar tie, she would remember with a sigh the strong affection revealed by that little incident. In one moment it had told its own story—of fond protection on the one side, and grateful reliance on the other—as intelligibly as if the parties had been known for years; and she marvelled that, in a class where, from want of mental cultivation, externals must seem so important, such superior personal attractions as one sister enjoyed, should create no taint of vanity or of jealousy to sully their mutual love. But Mrs Villars reasoned wrong. She had yet to learn that the heart teaches its own lesson—the most unsophisticated often the warmest; and that true affection is a sunbeam that blinds our eyes to the deficiencies of the beloved ones, while it casts a ray of tenfold brightness on every excellence they possess.

At last one morning, in an early walk more extended than usual, she came to a cluster of cottages near the shore, at some distance from the village. It was a pleasant, animated scene, and Mrs Villars stopped to admire the eager groups collected round some boats returned from the night's fishing, and either making bargains for themselves, or congratulating their sons or husbands on their success. As she lingered, a young girl tripped lightly by with a basket on her arm; and even in that passing glance she could not mistake the bright eyes and glowing complexion of her late acquaintance. A look of recognition also beamed from those same eyes. Half hesitatingly she paused for an instant,

then with a modest curtsy was passing on, when Mrs Villars accosted her, and, with an inquiry for her sister, joined her on her way.

During their walk, she learned that Ellen and Mary Roche were sisters, their mother long since dead, and their father—'Wisha, he was just nothing at all.' Mrs Villars had lived long enough in Ireland to know that the smothered sigh which followed that little hesitating sentence indicated a good-natured kind of idler, who smoked tobacco when he could get it, drank whisky on the same terms, and was a burthen to the family it was his duty to support. But how eagerly the speaker turned from that unwelcome theme, to dwell on the perfections of her sister Ellen! And as she did so, the varying cheek, the eyes sometimes smiling, sometimes tearful, and the occasionally tremulous tones, spoke in her own favour as eloquently as if Ellen had been there in turn to tell the tale, and more than that we need not say. Ellen was the eldest, though she looked so small; but an early accident had made her lame, and checked her growth; and in those days of suffering she had learned to use her needle with such skill, as to enable her to contribute materially to their livelihood now. 'She could never come with me, ma'am, when I went out to play with other girls, or follow me when I was clambering on the rocks, or picking shells on the shore; but she was always on the watch for me, as a mother looks for her child. I never found her missing from the door when I was coming home; and if, as sometimes happened, I forgot to be back in time, I saw the trouble in her pale cheeks and sad eyes, though she never said a word, so that made me careful not to wander any more. And she taught me to be tidy, ma'am; for I was very wild and careless, and would never have cared about tearing my clothes, only she always took and mended them, without ever noticing it; and she taught me to be gentle, and to curb my hasty spirit, for I saw her suffer pain and sorrow without murmur or complaint; and above all, ma'am, and here the tearful eyes filled entirely, 'she taught me hope when my heart was sinking, and the power to bear when sorrow in earnest came—'

She stopped short, and drew her hand across her eyes; then looking archly into Mrs Villars's face, who, deeply interested, was quite unprepared for the sudden transition, she added gaily—'Here I am all the time praising myself—tidy, gentle, and strong-hearted! Oh, lady, they are all but feathers from that sweet dove's wing!'

As she spoke they approached a whitewashed cottage, poor, but neater than is usually seen. In place of the dunghill there was a narrow little strip of garden, paved off from the road, filled with gay flowers glowing brightly in the morning sun; and at the door, as Mary had just been telling, was Ellen, looking out for her with the watchful habit of their early days. A few quick steps forward, a whispered word from Mary, and Ellen turned to the lady with a pleased smile of recognition, and invited her in to rest. She gladly accepted the invitation; and soon found herself seated in the clean and tidy, though poorly-furnished dwelling. The only articles of superior comfort were a small work-table, placed near the window, and beside it a sort of easy-chair, made of straw, both evidently adapted to the occupation and infirmity of poor Ellen. Oh yes, we had nearly forgotten, the room was not quite unornamented either; for over the fireplace was arranged a large piece of coral, and some foreign shells, and near the window hung a cage, in which was a bird with brilliant plumage, all telling plainly of some friend from over the sea.

Mrs Villars had at this time the good fortune to escape an interview with the good-for-nothing father, and had the pleasure of talking, without interruption, to the two young girls, so different, and yet so united. This interview was succeeded by many others. Ellen was supplied with as much work as she could accomplish; and Mary, who, under her instructions, had also become

very expert at her needle, would hasten with double diligence through her more active employments, that she might gain some time to share in the occupation of her sister. And sweet it was to see those two young creatures seated, with busy fingers, at their work on the quiet summer's eve; Ellen earnestly dwelling on some instructive lesson, while, with deferential gentleness, Mary would raise her loving eyes now and then, in silent assurance that the words were going home to her heart; or, in turn, those eyes would sparkle gaily, and a happy smile would brighten Ellen's graver face as she listened to some passing jest or merry narrative from her light-hearted Mary. But were they always thus alone? We reckon the father as nothing; for, with his hands in his pockets, he lounged in the sunshine while sunshine lasted, and then took his supper, and went off early to bed. He had his cottage and a little plot of ground rent free for his own life, and, caring only for himself, considered any exertion for a future provision quite superfluous. Even so: the girls had another companion who would often, as Ellen would say, come in 'to idle them' in the evening; sometimes to make them laugh and talk—sometimes to read while they worked—and, oftener still, when the sun was sinking low, and the evening waves curling gently towards the shore, to coax them to 'lay aside their stitchery,' and saunter with him for half an hour along the cliffs. Notwithstanding the difference in their station, Mrs Villars was soon regarded as a friend by those two motherless girls, and each meeting increased the interest she felt in them. She had given them employment and encouragement, and, more welcome still, had on more than one occasion given them affectionate sympathy and advice; but still she observed that at times some cloud was hanging over them, heavier even than poverty, and she determined not to conclude her visit to the sea-side without, if possible, winning their entire confidence, and making some effort for their happiness.

One morning Ellen was alone in the cottage, when Mrs Villars entered with a small parcel in her hand, and asked her gaily, 'Well, Ellen, would you like to make your fortune at once?' Ellen returned her smile with one as gay; but in an instant the bright expression vanished, and clasping her hands tightly, while her delicate figure actually trembled with emotion, she answered earnestly, 'Would I wish to make my fortune? Oh, lady, I would give all the work these poor hands can ever do while life is spared me, to make a fortune of ten guineas before another month passes by!' Then burying her quivering features in her hands, she sank back into the little chair from which she had just risen, and burst into tears. Mrs Villars, amazed at an agitation so unlike the usual placid and collected demeanour of Ellen, sat down beside her, and sought to comfort and calm her with tones even kinder than her words. For a while all would not do; but at last Ellen raised her head, hurriedly wiped away her tears, and putting back her hair with her still trembling hands, in faltering accents asked pardon for her foolishness; then, gaining confidence with the effort, she related, even as friend would tell to friend, the sorrow that was weighing on her heart.

She told what a young and helpless creature Mary was when they were left even worse than orphans; how she, older by a few years, was still older from suffering and much inward thought; and how, from that hour, she had taken the little darling to her heart, and resolved to fill a mother's place to her through life. Then she told how the task was more difficult, because her beauty won indulgence from every one, and how she feared to lose her love in the checks she found it needful to impose. 'But there was a deep mine of truth and sense in that seemingly thoughtless nature; and even in childish anger, she never forgot that I was her best and truest friend—even then her chief care was not to grieve me; and you know, ma'am, how she loves me now,' said Ellen, looking up with a glow of intense feeling; and reading her answer in the lady's eyes, she dropped her

own as she softly murmured, 'Yes, even as I love her!'

There was a moment's pause; and then in lighter tones Ellen went on to say that even such love, perfect as it was, could not entirely satisfy a heart like Mary's; that she always knew the time must come when she should be contented with a sister's place; and instead of regret, felt proud and happy when she found that Mary's heart was gained by one who had loved her almost from childhood—the most dutiful son, the best-conducted and most industrious boy in the place. 'I rejoiced in their happiness, and I encouraged it,' continued she; 'little dreaming that I was building on the very sand. Garret Mahony was a sailor, and had been more than once abroad; but his father was grown old and infirm, and as he was the last of many children, he made him promise never to leave him again. So he had a good deal of idle time, except when out fishing, and those leisure hours were mostly spent in the company he loved best; while I, proud of my own sweet Mary, and seeing no one in the world to compare with her, never for one moment dreamt that any could look on her with other eyes. One evening Garret came in, and at the first glance I saw something was the matter. Happily, Mary was out; gone to carry home some work; and I was able to bear the first wild burst of his sorrow alone. But there was anger too, as well as sorrow; and though I had to bid my heart be still, that I might quiet his, yet it was the bitterest hour of my life.

'He told me that his father that morning had questioned him as to all the time he latterly spent here, and that, glad of the opening, he had at once avowed his love for Mary, and tried to speak of her as she well deserved: that his father had listened quietly until he was done, and after he was done, and then at last asked coldly what she had, along with what she was? This was a question that never had occurred to Garret; but he well knew there could be but one answer, and so he told his father, adding, that Mary was more precious than money or land. But the old man smiled, as some will do when they think young hearts have spoken in their folly, and he told his son the time would come when he would see with different eyes. Garret grew impatient, and was answering warmly, when his father silenced him, and, in a voice of command, desired him to attend. He is a proud and stern man, dear lady, old Maurice Mahony, and with a name for sense that has given him power over all that come within his shadow; so no wonder that his son listened with respect, though his heart was rebelling at every word. The father went on to say that he never knew any good come of marrying a girl that could bring nothing but herself, unless she met with one as badly off, and then they might pull on together; but as long as the husband had any income, the wife that never knew the value of money of her own would think there was no end to his, and would soon grow discontented when her wishes were refused. Then would come extravagance, then anger, then bitterness, then want; and no knowing how many more evils he would have added, only Garret's fiery countenance showed he could bear no further. He changed then so far as to say that this was not out of covetousness, for the day Garret married to please him, he would give him up his share in the hooker, and that was well worth twenty guineas; but that he expected his wife would bring at least as much again; and unless she did, they never should have his consent or blessing.

'Garret was cut to the heart. There was a show of reason in his father's words; but it was calculating, heartless reason; so, without pretending to answer it, he tried to touch his feelings; but all in vain. The old man was not to be shaken; and at last poor Garret, as he himself confessed, lost patience, temper, respect itself; and, in words which no child should have spoken, no parent could forgive, reproached his father with cruelty and covetousness, withdrew his promise of never leaving him, vowed to go to sea again, and, sink or swim, never to return till he could bring home an inde-

pendence for himself and Mary. Oh, lady, those words are few and cold to convey the feelings that were pouring like a torrent from his heart! All were mixed and struggling together—anger, disappointment, self-reproach, love for Mary, duty to his father; each feeling so true, and yet so opposing, my very heart bled for him, for her—for all. But before I could well picture the consequences, in came Mary herself, her sweet face glowing from her walk, and from pleasure at being home with me again. One glance, and Garret buried his face in his folded arms on the table; the smile and the colour fled from Mary's cheek, and, without even a look at me, she sprang forward, and grasping his shoulder, asked wildly what was the matter. I had thought to break this reverse to her myself, to spare him the telling, and her the hearing it from him; but, as I said, she came back before a plan was formed, and now there could be no disguise; his look had prepared her for the worst, and I saw by her terrified countenance that even the truth would be a relief.

"And so he told it all again; but this time, oh, how different! The presence of her beloved came like sweet dew upon his heart, and melted away all the fierce and stormy feelings which had made me doubly grieved. With touching, yet manly sorrow and repentance, he related his disappointment and his fault, and he told it to one whose generous nature fully felt his confidence, and lost the first sharp sting of grief in sympathy for the estrangement between the father and his son. She wept, without doubt, long and sadly; but her face was turned away, and she listened, without interrupting, from beginning to end. Then, when all was over, she raised her head; her face was very pale, and her lip trembled; but there was a light in her eyes, and a steadfast look, that made me remember the high, proud spirit of her childish days, and tremble for the words she was about to speak. I wronged her in that passing fear, even I that should have known her well. It was no pride, but a holy resolution that was shining in that earnest look. She laid her hand affectionately on Garret's arm, and in a very calm, low tone, asked him, "Did the old man say anything against me, Garret—against myself?" He gave her a look of surprise, almost of reproach, as he exclaimed, "Oh, Mary!" It was enough. A faint smile rested on her lip as her heart told her Garret felt such a thought impossible; and, after a moment's pause, she continued, "Then, Garret, our first thought must be of him. Go to him at once, and gain his pardon for that disrespect, and comfort his heart, even as you did mine, by the goodness of your sorrow. You will feel nothing but misery till you have his forgiveness; and think how he must be grieving now! Then, for the future, we are both very young, and may well wait, with trust in God and in each other, for the changes time may bring. Your father made no objection to me except for poverty, and as that is no real fault, who knows but he may change his mind."

"Garret shook his head despondingly as he answered, "Ah, Mary, you little know him; but I'll go at once and ask his forgiveness, for, as you truly say, I cannot have rest or peace until I do so. But as to remaining idle any longer at home, when gold is to be made, and happiness depends on it, it is out of the question, Mary! You must not ask me to do that."

"But indeed I do, Garret; that is what I ask you. You gave a promise to your old father, and you must not leave him. God always grants his blessing to the dutiful son; and would I be the one to tempt you to disobedience, and so provoke his curse? No, Garret; it surely is not we that wish for money; no, we want is your father's consent; and that would be farther off than ever if you were to desert him, and make him look on me as the cause."

"Garret still remonstrated; but Mary's simple faith and sense of duty finally conquered so far as to gain his promise to wait one year; and then he declared impetuously that if his father by that time had not

changed his mind, he would no longer yield to his unreasonable whims.

"Satisfied with averting the present evil, Mary urged him no farther then; but hurried him away, not to lose a moment in becoming reconciled to his father. Then, worn out with her long effort at composure, my poor girl threw herself into my arms, and wept without restraint her long-repressed and bitter tears. But Mary's heart is like an April day—sunshine ever following the showers; and after a while she raised her head, and with a cheerfulness that took me by surprise, exclaimed, "Well, Ellen, at any rate we shall not be parted; life will glide along the same as ever; and with hope to gladden, and the sense of doing right to bear us up, I think we ought to be even happier than before we were tried. And now from this time out," added she, with increasing liveliness, "I must be very careful, steady, and diligent, and so win a good character for old Maurice, as I have no money to buy one;" then sitting down to work with an air of diligence, she cried, "Now, Ellen, you'll have to bear witness in my favour, so here's to begin!"

Ellen then told how, in the evening, Garret returned; but though his heart was evidently lightened by his father's forgiveness, still it was also plain that he had not recovered his own disappointment. His impetuous, active nature found waiting and submission a hard trial; and it required a double exertion of fortitude on Mary's part to make him hope against hope. It was also evident that no change had been wrought in old Maurice's determination: so, convinced that matters could not long continue in this state, Ellen inwardly determined to make an effort to bring about some understanding. And an effort indeed it was for her. Naturally timid, and rendered still more diffident by her infirmity and secluded life, nothing but the power of an affection which was the first object of her existence, a love stronger than death, could have induced her to take the step she now meditated. This was to obtain an interview herself with old Maurice, and with her own lips plead the cause so dear to her heart. She knew him, as she had said, by report to be a hard and stern man; but she had also always heard he was a sensible and a just one. She had heard, too, of his having, in early life, loved his wife to idolatry, and cherishing her memory with a constancy that would never allow him to replace her; this, combined with his genuine love for Garret, inspired her with the hope that his feelings might be touched by her appeal; and she resolved on making an attempt to convince him that arithmetic was not the only rule for measuring human hearts.

We need not enlarge upon this interview. Enough to say, that, though at first causing some surprise, she was received with civility and kindness, which gave her courage and even hope; and though she found it impossible to remove an opinion which had become a fixed idea in old Maurice's mind, still, conquered by her earnestness, he modified it so far as to promise that if, at the end of the year, Mary could bring him half the sum originally demanded—namely, ten guineas, and this fairly earned by their united industry—he would be proud and happy to welcome her as his daughter. In the meantime, he also required a promise from Ellen to keep both this meeting and agreement a secret from every creature except Mary herself.

"From Garret?" asked Ellen pleadingly.

"Yes, from Garret especially," said the old man.

"Can Mary be depended on to oblige me in this?"

"You shall see," answered Ellen proudly. Old Maurice smiled; and ratifying the treaty with a warm benediction and shake of the hand, they parted, mutually pleased. Since then, long months had passed away; and yet not so very long, for hope and constant industry had made the time seem short; and if Garret would sometimes, without those aids, wax impatient, a gentle word from Ellen, reminding him of his promise, would induce him to keep it with a good grace. He would good-

humouredly say, 'You are our pilot, Ellen, and in such hands it would be hard indeed if we refused to answer the helm.' While Mary, assenting with beaming eyes, would think to herself, 'Ah! if he knew but all.'

But now the time was drawing very near. The 'Sarah Jane,' the vessel in which Garret was to have taken a berth last year, was to sail again in another month; and more than once of late he had mentioned this in a way that plainly showed his mind was dwelling on the voyage. The two girls worked harder, more perseveringly than ever; but they lived in a remote place, and, until Mrs Villars's kindness had provided them with employment, their tasks had been precarious, and remuneration small; so that when, on that very morning, after a painful interview with Garret, the sisters reckoned over their little board, they found it scarcely amounting to two-thirds of the requisite sum, and Ellen sadly acknowledged that, from former experience, she was convinced it was useless to expect any further concession from old Maurice.

In this desponding mood she was found, as we have related, by Mrs Villars, who listened to her artless narrative with deep and unaffected sympathy. When all was told, she spoke a few words of comfort and encouragement, expressive of the great use of trial to fortify and exalt the mind; and dwell upon those lovely traits in Mary's character which had been just described, and which might have withered away under too bright a sun. Then opening the little parcel she still held, she unfolded a large square of lace, and laying a pattern before Ellen, said, 'Do you think, Ellen, you both could work this into a veil, and have it ready by this day month? It is for a young friend to wear at her wedding, and you shall have five guineas if you do it well.' Ellen's heart gave one wild throb; for a moment she tried in vain to speak; then finding utterance, poured forth her thanks and hopes with a rapidity almost unintelligible. 'Five guineas!—oh, dearest lady, what would we not attempt for that? Five guineas!—why, it has taken nearly a long year to put so much more together, and now it will seem but a day to earn the rest; and then you will at last be happy, my own Mary—happier and better for all your trouble. Oh, ma'am, fear not but we will accomplish it; and night and day we will work until it is done.' And night and day they worked, Mary at the plainer part, Ellen at the delicate stitches; while with admiration and renewed hope they contemplated each morning the progress they had made. At first Ellen thought to have given Mary the pleasure of a surprise, and, until it was done, to keep the amount of their reward a secret; but they had been too long accustomed to sharing every thought, to practise any concealment now; and one day remarking an unusually rapid progress, the whole truth burst in gladness from her lips.

To describe Mary's delight and astonishment is impossible. More busily she could not work, and for a while her trembling fingers refused to work at all; but day after day the sweet hope strengthened, and at last the appointed morning came, and found their task all but completed. It was, however, a day of unusual interruptions; and Ellen had each hour fresh cause to admire the improvement in Mary's temper, as, without an impatient word, she would lay aside her work and attend to every demand. But evening still found them at their unfinished task, and Mrs Villars required it that night at the very latest. Just as they were busily employed, in came Garret with his usual request for an evening walk, and, half-affronted when refused, he said reproachfully, 'I believe there is some charm in that cobweb, for you never will put it by. Here I have tried in vain to get you out for an entire month. I will begin to think at last, Mary, that you take no pleasure in my company.'

Mary's quick feelings rose at this undeserved reproach, and, with somewhat of her old spirit, she was about to retort; but remembering all their past sorrow, all her present hope, she paused and answered gently,

'To prove the contrary, Garret, I condemn you never to leave me till this cobweb, as you call it, is fairly spun; and then—' She stopped short with a gasp, at having so nearly betrayed her secret; but her look was so eloquent of love and hope, that Garret started from his chair, and bending over her, inquired in hurried tones, 'What then?—dearest Mary, what then?'

She threw back her head merrily as she looked up into his face; and though she tried to compose her features, a thousand smiles and dimples contradicted the demure accent with which she continued, 'And then you may come with us when we take it home.' Both Ellen and Garret laughed at this anticlimax; Ellen especially, well knowing what was in the glad girl's heart, and amused, besides, at Garret's somewhat puzzled countenance. But that soon brightened again under the happy influence; and, without seeking the reason why, he found himself chattering away with a lighter heart than he had felt for months.

The moon arose; but as that fair light has business of its own, our workwomen reserved it for a future hour, and sent Garret for the more terrestrial assistance of a pair of candles, to put the few concluding stitches to their work. At length behold it finished! Ellen resigned the last two or three stitches to her sister, that by her hands it should be completed; and, holding it up with an exclamation of triumph, poor Mary gazed joyfully at it for an instant, then flinging her arms round Ellen's neck, burst into tears. Garret looked on wonderingly, and made some efforts at consolation so wide of the mark, that Mary's weeping was at once changed into laughter, until her bright eyes overflowed again. Ellen at last, remembering that the best of men may sometimes grow impatient, and unwilling to try Garret too far, laid her hand on his arm, and said, 'This is a bridal veil, Garret, and Mary and I have worked hard day and night to have it ready; it is to be worn by a fair and happy bride, while we—'

Garret required no further explanation of Mary's tears and excitement; and shaking off Ellen's hand with an upbraiding glance, as if he thought her for once in her life unfeeling, he answered warmly, 'And if she is ever so fair and happy, she cannot be fairer than my own sweet Mary, or more deserving of the happiest lot.' Then, before she had time to answer, he seized the veil, and playfully throwing it over Mary's glossy hair, he added, 'Now tell me, Ellen, will there ever be a fairer bride than that?'

But he was answered by a loud cry from Ellen. In passing, the veil had touched the flame of the candle, and in an instant the delicate covering was in a blaze. Quick as thought, she tore it from that beloved head; the next moment it lay in scorched and worthless fragments on the floor. To describe their consternation, their revulsion of feeling, is impossible. The present calamity was so overpowering, that for the minute it swallowed up all thought of remoter consequences, and—pale, speechless, and aghast—they gazed in silence first at one another, then at the fragile object on which their hopes so lately rested. At last Mary, pale as death, and almost as calm, laid her arm on her sister's neck, and in a low sad tone murmured, 'You see, Ellen, 'tis not to be!' Those words, uttered so despondingly, and Ellen's piteous tears, revealed to Garret somewhat of the truth; and though he could not guess the full extent of the misfortune, still he became at once aware that, in a moment's heedlessness, he had destroyed some plan essential to the happiness of all, and his self-accusation almost amounted to despair.

It was morning once more; the sun shone out as brightly as if it had only to awaken light and happy hearts, and the sisters had arisen betimes, and again were busy with their daily work. With the poor, there can be no useless indulgence of regret, and the labour of one hour often conquers the sorrow of the preceding; but we cannot wonder at the languor that now hung over Mary's usually active movements, or blame the

large tear that would escape from her long, dark eyelashes, as a gentle sigh from Ellen now and then caught her ear. Otherwise, they were quite silent; they had exhausted the language of sorrow; and it was not at once the foundations of hope could be laid again. Still, they both were occupied with their different employments when a footstep approached, and looking round, Mary saw old Maurice Mahony standing in the doorway. Starting at sight of such an unusual visitor, her first thought was of Garret—that some harm had befallen him, and, trembling violently, she found herself unable to ask; but Ellen, with more self-possession, wished him good morning; and as he answered, 'Good-morrow,' kindly—'Always busy, I see,' the tones of his voice at once reassured poor Mary, and, awakened, she scarcely knew why, some indefinite feeling of hope.

He had not addressed her, but he now held out his hand, and drew her to a chair, beside which he seated himself. Ellen laid by her work, and there was a momentary pause of stillness and expectation. Maurice was a remarkable-looking man. His hair, almost snow-white, combed back into smooth, old-fashioned curls, and his clothes, cut according to the fashion of a former generation, would have given him the appearance of great age, had it not been contradicted by his fresh complexion and still elastic step. His tall figure, scarcely stooped until his recent illness, and his firm, well-shaped mouth, and sagacious eyes and forehead, betokened an intellect still retaining all the vigour of its prime. He sat, as we have said, for a moment in silence, looking at the two anxious girls. At last he spoke; and, still retaining Mary's hand, related how Garret had returned home last night in a state little short of distraction; his heart so entirely full of one subject, that though it had never been renewed between them since the first painful day—under the influence of strong excitement, the interval seemed as nothing—the long-smothered feeling burst forth, and he told him all that had occurred.

'It was very late,' continued the old man, 'but I could not go to rest till he came in, for I had felt all the evening more lonely than usual. The fire burnt low as I sat before it in thought; and fancy brought back again her I had laid long years ago in her narrow grave, and the children that had followed her; and I could see them all again smiling and chattering round the hearth, as they used in those old hours. At last, from being very sorrowful, those memories grew pleasant, and a dawning of the future seemed to gain upon the shadows of the past. I began to think; for the heart,' added the old man solemnly, 'is often prepared within itself for the way it ought to act; I began to ask myself why there were not smiling faces and sweet young voices round my hearth again, and why my best and only one was at that moment under the roof of a stranger—his thoughts full of bitterness against the old father that loved him all the time better than the veins of his heart—' 'Oh no, no,' interrupted Mary softly. Old Maurice sighed as he continued—'If it was so, Mary, I had to blame myself. It was shown me then that I had been too positive and unbending; and Ellen's words, and all her loving arguments, came back fresher to my mind than the day I heard them. I was not so hardened as you thought me that day, Ellen,' added he, turning to her; 'but I thought a little trial would do the young people no harm; for I knew their hearts were in the right place, only they wanted ballast. But it is not good for short-sighted mortals to take the province of the Most High. When He afflicts, He sees and knows all things. We may often do mischief, though intending good, when inflicting needless trial on the hearts that love us; and so Mary, achree, even before Garret came in, I had resolved on my future course, and was waiting to tell him so before I slept that night; but when he did come, and all was told—all the mischief he had done, and the sweet, patient way you bore it—I thought the night too long till I could come and relieve my own heart and yours.

'And now, Ellen,' continued he, 'how far were you able to fulfil your promise? for that you both did your best, I have no more doubt than that the sun is shining on us now. I often noticed you hard at work when you little thought I was passing, let alone the good report from every one that ever names you. And there was a promise too, Ellen, that you made for another,' added the old man with a smile; 'and Mary, as there, you kept it well, as I saw by Garret last night; and though he'll hardly thank me for teaching you to keep a secret from him, he'll feel it makes you the worthier of his trust in time to come. Is this the money?' asked he, as he took the little box containing their united earnings from Ellen's hand, and poured out the precious hoard upon the table—half-crowns, shillings, sixpences, even halfpence—all as they had been received and deposited there, and a tear glistened in the old man's eyes as he reckoned over those tokens of affection and persevering industry. The sum amounted in all to little more than seven pounds; and when the total was announced, Ellen shook her head as she remarked, 'It would have been too little after all.' 'It is enough,' answered Maurice quietly; and selecting from amongst the coins a crooked sixpence, which, pierced with a little hole, had once probably been a true-love token, he added, 'I shall keep this for a luck-penny while I live; after that, Mary, it shall be yours in memory of this day. That is our share. The rest, dear Ellen—for your sake only I wish it had been more—but, such as it is, keep it till you meet with some old man as unreasonable as myself.' Ellen remonstrated; but in vain. Old Maurice made it a condition; and as Mary took his side, two to one carried the day: then, in compassion to Garret's impatience, he left them, as he said, to have his place better filled.

With what different feelings did the little group again pursue their way to the residence of Mrs Villars. Forgetful of her own disappointment, she had listened with kind and womanly sympathy to their sorrowful communication the night before, and now they hastened to tell her of their joy, and to ask her whether the time could possibly allow them to repair the accident by working another. 'All for love, dear lady, this time; you must not think of offering us any money now!' But Mrs Villars had already taken measures to supply the loss, and, as her best apology for the delay, had transmitted to her young friend the burnt fragments of the veil as an evidence of the beauty of the work, and of the accident which destroyed it. In relating the circumstances, she added the hope that, as in Ireland a conflagration was considered an auspicious omen to a bride, good fortune might attend those relics in a tenfold proportion to the sorrow they had caused; and the young English girl, as she smiled at the augury, sent a thought across the waters from her own happy home, and determined not to enjoy the prosperous influence alone. She laid the open parcel on the table, and told its story in a way that went home to the hearts of her auditors. Had she been covetous, she might have made Mary Roche the richest of her name; but, guided by judgment, as well as feeling, she contented herself with accepting a trifling gift from each, and so realised a sum which, though moderate in her eyes, far more than compensated for the labour they had lost. It was forwarded to Mrs Villars, who divided it equally between the surprised and grateful girls; and it would have been more than human nature, had they not felt some little pleasure in the consciousness that Mary was not a portionless bride after all.

She and Garret never forgot their separate lessons of perseverance and patience acquired in that year of probation. They had truly learned them by heart, and such experience is seldom obliterated; and Ellen, happiest in the happiness of others—the dearest object of her heart attained—still felt that she had a sacred duty to perform. She devoted herself more entirely to her father, and, in studying his wishes, endeavoured gradually to improve them; and she was rewarded. Drawn to each

other by the absence of their mutual companion, he seemed each day more conscious of her excellence. Stimulated by the example of her cheerfulness and industry, he began to feel ashamed of his own listless indolence; and by degrees, shaking off the influence of habit, he became an altered man. The 'Work-girl's' cup of joy was full!

POPULAR MYTHOLOGY OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

In a former paper, we gave some illustrations of the Literature of the Middle Ages, drawn from a recently-published work, containing much interesting antiquarian information: the following notices of the popular mythology of these ages are derived chiefly from the same source.

The old Teutonic Pagans, whose irruption into the provinces of the Roman empire, in the fifth and sixth centuries of the Christian era, is always to be regarded as the true commencement of what we call modern history, brought with them, from their Scandinavian homes, a mythology like themselves—wild, imaginative, savage, and colossal. The sea, to them, was peopled with grendels and monster-snakes, which inhabited caves along the coast, or dragged their oozy length along the bottom, now and then rising to the surface to grapple the boats of the fishermen in their folds: the fens, rivers, and forests, had their nickers and fire-drakes, which devoured travellers, and sallied out from their dens at night to ravage the surrounding country: the very air was full of demons, elves, and goblins, to whom rain, sunshine, wind, sleet, hail, and storm, were owing. The existence of these multitudinous supernatural beings was as much a part of the modern polytheism, which believed in Thor and Woden, and the other huge Teutonic deities, and represented them feasting together in the hall of the gods, and drinking bucketfuls of ale with uproarious mirth, as the existence of satyrs, fauns, and nymphs, was a part of the old Homeric polytheism, with its blue-eyed Minervas and its imperial Jupiters. Now, just as Christianity had to overthrow the polytheism of the ancient Greeks and Romans, in order to establish itself in the Roman empire, so, on the irruption of the Teutonic races, it had to triumph over the religion of Thor and Woden, in order still to be supreme. Both these conquests it achieved. Slowly, but steadily, it crept from Jerusalem over the surface of the Roman empire, eating out, or dissolving into itself, all existing beliefs and philosophies, till it became the prevailing religion; and finally, when the empire was overrun and shattered by the German invaders, it rose, clear and spire-like, out of the universal wreck, asserted its supremacy over the conquerors themselves, and made Europe its own again. The popular beliefs, however, bore the marks of both these conflicts. The theology of the early ages, or the ages of the Fathers, was tinged with the heathen philosophy of Plato and others; no doubt also with the old polytheism of Greece and Rome, although this in an inferior degree, as that mythology had already become aged and decrepit. In the conversion of the German races, the case was somewhat different. Here there was no civilised philosophy, no Platonic or Peripatetic school to contend with, and exert an influence over Christianity; but, on the other hand, there was a young, vigorous, fresh, and poetical mythology, with grendels, goblins, fire-drakes, and thousands of other unconquerable things. Accordingly, the popular mythology of the middle ages was a compromise between Christian ideas and Teutonic legends. There was so much of course of the old German creed, which had to be entirely abandoned. Thor and Woden, for instance, and the other gods, had to be given up as totally incompatible with the new faith; but there was a great portion of the old belief which did not appear so reprehensible in a Christian point of view, to which, therefore, the clergy did not object so vehemently,

and which ultimately, with some changes of phraseology, was adopted into the popular creed of all Christian nations. 'Even now,' says Mr Wright, 'after so many centuries of successive improvement and refinement, in our salutations, in our eating and drinking, even in our children's games, we are perpetually, though unwittingly, doing the same things which our forefathers did in honour or in fear of the elves and nymphs of the heathen creed.'

The clergy, as the guardians of the popular faith, were intrusted with the charge of deciding what old Teutonic legends and practices were admissible in the new constitution of society. That they exercised this right to the suppression, or at least to the discouragement, of many Pagan practices which the laity were disposed to keep up, is proved by numerous laws passed by the clergy in Anglo-Saxon times against such practices. In one old Anglo-Saxon *penitentiary*, for instance, the following regulations occur: "If any one observe lots, or divination, or keep his wake (watch) at any wells, or at any other created things, except at God's church, let him fast three years: the first on bread and water, and the other two, on Wednesdays and Fridays, on bread and water; and the other days let him eat his meat, but without flesh."

"The same for a woman who useth any witchcraft to her child, or who draws it through the earth at the meeting of roads; because that is great heathenness."

"If a mouse fall into liquor, let it be taken out, and sprinkle the liquor with holy water; and if it be alive, the liquor may be used; but if it be dead, throw the liquor out, and cleanse the vessel."

The Teutonic nickers, elves, and other supernatural beings, however, were too strongly lodged in the popular imagination to be easily expelled; and accordingly, all that could be done was to give them new names, or at least, retaining their old names, to assign them functions in accordance with the prevailing theology of the time. An immense number of them were forthwith converted into devils, subordinate to the Evil Principle of Scripture. To these devils, besides their principal function of tormenting and misleading mankind, was assigned a large share of influence in all natural phenomena, especially in meteorology. 'The monks,' says Mr Wright, 'sometimes invented strange stories to account for the influence which the devils thus exerted, because they were not aware of the real source from which they had been adopted. An inedited English poet of the thirteenth century, after explaining, in a popular manner, the nature of thunder and lightning, proceeds to show how it happens to cause so much mischief. "When Christ suffered death," says he, "he bound the devil, and broke down hell-gates in order to let out those who suffered there. His visit was attended with such terrible thunder, that the devils have been afraid of thunder ever since; and if any of them happen to be caught in a storm, they fly as quick as wind, and kill men, and destroy trees, &c. which they meet in their way. This is the reason that people are killed in a storm."

As a curious illustration of the transition of old Teutonic ideas into the popular theological language of the middle ages, we may mention that our 'Old Nick' is a mere corruption of the word 'nicker'—the name of a large class of supernatural beings among the German Pagans, generally supposed to be water fairies. The modern 'Old Nick' is, therefore, literally the old 'nicker.'

Few countries retained so much of the old Teutonic mythology as England; and, strangely enough, it is from the Lives of the Saints that we derive most of our information respecting the Teutonic elves and fairies. 'A more extensive knowledge,' says Mr Wright, 'of the Anglo-Saxon fairies may perhaps be gathered by a careful perusal of the legends of the Anglo-Saxon saints, than all the other books together can afford us. It only need be borne in mind, that in the transformation, the elves, when mischievously inclined, became devils; when beneficent, angels. The fens and wilds are, in Beowulf,

constantly peopled by troops of elves, and nickers, and worms (dragons and serpents). "So, in the saints' legends, are they ever the haunts of hobgoblins (*demonies*); and many and fierce were the struggles between them and the hermits, before the latter succeeded in establishing themselves in their deserted abodes. St Guthlac built him a mud-cot in the isle of Croyland, a wild spot, then covered with woods, and pools, and sedge marshes. The isle had hitherto been uninhabited by men; but many a goblin played among its solitudes, and very unwilling were they to be driven out. They came upon him in a body; dragged him from his cell, sometimes tossed him in the air, at others, dipped him overhead in the bogs, and then tore him through the midst of the brambles; but their efforts were vain against one who was armed like Guthlac. Sometimes these goblins were more obliging towards their new neighbours, and directed them where to dig for treasures; though it appears that they seldom gained much by seeking after "heathen gold." Godric, a celebrated saint, occupied a cell in the wilds of Durham, and was often troubled by these spiritual enemies. On a time, however, one of them appeared by night, and told him where he would find a hidden hoard. Godric was not, it appears, an avaricious man; but he thought he might do some good with the money which was thus revealed to him, and to work he went with pickaxe and shovel. When, however, he had dug a considerable depth—though we are not told that he obtained a sight of the promised treasure—he was terror-struck by seeing come out of the hole a troop of small black dwarfs, who, with a laugh of derision, cast at him little smoking balls. Godric dropped his shovel, and, it is almost needless to add, never sought treasures again.

The elves or goblins of the middle ages are distinguishable into three classes: the positively malevolent, who were accounted imps or emissaries of Satan, and whose constant purpose was to ruin souls; the good and benevolent, whose nature partook more of the angelic, and who made the improvement of the human race their object; and the merely eccentric or mischievous, who, leading an independent existence, delighted, solely for their own amusement, to intermeddle in human affairs, and whose aim seemed to be more physical confusion than moral evil. These last, called often the "merry sprites," made their presence known by throwing dirt, and other harmless things, at every one they came near; and they continually plagued them by cutting holes in their coats, and playing other such mischievous pranks. Sometimes they would talk with the people of the house; and when displeased, or mischievously inclined, they scrupled not to tell in their presence all their secrets and private actions, much to the shame and confusion of many who were so exposed. When any attempt was made to exorcise them, they threw dirt at the priests themselves; and Giraldus thinks, from the inefficiency of the exorcisms of the church in driving them away, that the power of the priests was only efficient against spirits of a malignant nature. During the reign of the first Richard, there appeared frequently, and for a long space of time, in the house of Sir Osbern de Bradwell, at Dagworth in Suffolk, "a certain fantastical spirit," who conversed with the family of the aforesaid knight, always imitating the voice of an infant. He called himself Malkin; and he said that his mother and brother dwelt in a neighbouring house, and that they often chided him because he had left them, and had presumed to hold converse with mankind. The things which he did and said were both wonderful and very laughable, and he often told people's secrets. At first, the family of the knight were extremely terrified; but by degrees they became used to him, and conversed familiarly with him. With the family he spoke English, and that, too, in the dialect of the place. But he was by no means deficient in learning; for when the chaplain made his appearance, he talked in Latin with perfect ease, and discoursed with him upon the Scriptures. He made himself heard and felt, too, readily

enough; but he was never seen but once. It seems that he was most attached to one of the female part of the family, a fair maiden, who had long prayed him to show himself to her. At last, after she had promised faithfully not to touch him, he granted her request, and there appeared to her a small infant, clad in a white frock.

These sprites were generally invisible, as this story intimates. There were persons, however, who were gifted with the faculty of seeing these elves, and who described to others their shape and appearance. One of these elf-seers was Ketel, a pious rustic, who lived at Farnham in Yorkshire, of whom many anecdotes are related by the historian William of Newbury. "While but a lad, Ketel was one day returning from the field, riding on the wagon-horse, when suddenly, in a place perfectly level and smooth, the horse stumbled, as though he had met with an obstacle, and his rider was thrown to the ground. As he raised himself up, Ketel beheld two very small black elves, who were laughing most lustily at the trick they had played upon him. From that hour was given to him the power of seeing the elves, wherever they might be, and whatever they might be doing; and he often saved people from their malice. He assured those who were fortunate enough to gain his confidence—for he did not tell these things to everybody—that there were some hobgoblins who were large and strong, and who were capable of doing much hurt to those who might fall into their power; but that others were very small and contemptible, incapable of doing much harm, and very stupid and foolish, but who delighted in tormenting and teasing mankind. He said that he often saw them sitting by the roadside, on the look-out for travellers, upon whom to play their tricks, and laughing in high glee when they could cause either them or their horses to stumble, particularly when the rider, irritated against his steed, spurred and beat him well after the accident. Ketel, as might be supposed, drew upon himself, by his officiousness, and by his power of seeing them, the hatred of the whole fraternity.

Besides the knowledge derived of the appearance of the elves from the relations of such gifted individuals as the elf-seer Ketel, there were ways and means of catching an elf for personal inspection. The English chronicler, John of Brompton, tells of the capture of an elf of dissipated habits, who, in the earlier part of the twelfth century, haunted the cellar of a monastery in the bishopric of Treves. "One morning, when the butler entered the cellar, he was not a little mortified at finding that, during the night, a whole cask of wine had been emptied, and that at least the greater part of its contents had been spilt on the floor. Supposing this accident to have arisen out of the carelessness of his man, the butler was angry, chid him severely, and, locking the door of the cellar, took the key into his own charge. But all his precautions were vain, for, the next morning, another cask of wine was in the same condition. The butler, now utterly astonished, repaired in all speed to the father abbot; and, after due consultation, they went together to the cellar, where, having sprinkled all the barrels with holy water, the latter closed firmly the door, sealed it with the seal of the abbey, and took the key into his own keeping. Next morning he repaired again to the cellar, and found the door exactly as he had left it. The door was speedily opened, and the first object which met his view was a small black elf, sticking fast by his hands to one of the vessels on which the holy water had been thrown. The abbot took the elf, clothed him in the habit of a monk, and kept him long in the school of the monastery, where he never grew any bigger. But one day an abbot from a neighbouring monastery came to examine the scholars, and, on hearing the story, counselled his brother abbot to keep no longer the devil in his house. The moment his monkish robe was taken from him, the elf vanished."

It was not altogether, however, on the relations of

elf-seers, or the occasional capture of a single specimen of the elf-kind, that people depended for their notions of this extraordinary class of beings. There were many cases of elves attaching themselves to particular households in a visible shape, and continuing for weeks, or even months, to go about doing all kinds of work in an efficient manner. 'In Pembrokeshire, an elf took up his abode in the house of one Eldor Stakepole, in the form of a red boy, who called himself Simon. Master Simon began "impudently," says our author, by taking the keys from the butler, and usurping his office. However, he was himself so provident a butler, that, while he held the office, everything seemed to prosper. He never waited to be told to do anything; but whatever his master or mistress was thinking of calling for, he brought it immediately, saying, "You want so and so; here it is." Moreover, he knew all about their money and their secret hoards; and often did he upbraid them on that account, for he hated nothing more than avarice; and he could not bear to see money laid up in holes, which might be employed in good and charitable uses. There was nothing, on the contrary, he liked better than giving plenty to eat and drink to the rustics; and he used to tell his master, that it was right he should be free in giving to them those things which, by their labours, he himself obtained. Indeed, Simon was an excellent servant; but he had one failing—he never went to church, and he never uttered a single "Catholic word." One remarkable thing was, that he never slept in the house at night, though he was always at his post by daybreak. Once, however, he was watched, and found to take up his lodging about the mill and the mill-dam. The next morning Simon came to his master, delivered up his keys, and left the house, after having filled the post of butler for about forty days.'

The most famous of all these visible elves, however, was Friar Rush, whose adventures form the theme of numerous legends of the middle ages. The idea of the story of Friar Rush is much higher than that of most goblin stories. In a certain abbey, the site of which is variously given in different versions of the story, the monks are living in a scandalously immoral manner. The devil instantly perceives that there could not be a better centre from which to operate upon human society than this abbey. Accordingly he, or at least one of his demons, appears at the abbey gate in the form of a young man wanting employment. He is received into the abbey, serves some time in the kitchen, rises to be master cook, and finally, after eight years, to be a friar. In the guise of a friar he works all manner of mischief: at first in the abbey itself, then in its immediate neighbourhood, and lastly, in other countries, into which he travels. It will be perceived what scope for powerful satire and invective against the vices of the age was afforded by such a device, in which the Evil Principle is made to assume the garb, and occupy the position, of a professing servant of Heaven.

In Mr Wright's work there is a very interesting chapter on the superstitions of modern Greece, in which it is shown that, among the peasants of that classic land, numerous myths and legends are current, identical with those current among the English, the Scotch, the French, and the Germans. He accounts for this by supposing all such legends, wherever found, to be of Teutonic origin. 'The dissimilarity,' he says, 'of many superstitions of the modern Greeks to any mentioned by the ancient writers, and the time at which they begin to be first alluded to, can leave little doubt of their having been introduced by the barbarians who crowded in at the decline of the empire. Their resemblance to those, of which a great part still exists among the nations of Teutonic blood, seems to point at once to the quarter whence they came. We could adduce many proofs of the numbers even of Norsemen who were in Greece at an early period, had we room.'

The popular mythology of all the European nations is, therefore, according to Mr Wright, derived from the

German races; and to trace this mythology beyond the fifth and sixth centuries, would be to inquire into the origin of these races, and their history previous to their invasion of the Roman empire.

VISIT TO THE CRYPT OF THE CAPUCHIN CONVENT AT MALTA.

BY A LADY.

'WILL you go on, or are you afraid?' These words were addressed to me by an old monk, as we stood together on the last step of the stair leading down to certain mysterious vaults which exist under the Capuchin convent of Malta. The monk was very decrepit, very ghastly—indeed; I may say, decidedly unearthly-looking—the voice was sepulchral, and the question not one to be answered without serious consideration; for he held in his hand (and the hand was uncommonly like that of a skeleton) a great key, which was destined to open the ponderous iron door of a very singular charnel-house. This convent is one of the very few, in fact, I believe the only one of importance, now extant, excepting that of Palermo, where the monks still retain the custom of preserving their dead unburied, and are yet in possession of the method by which they can keep the corpses of their brethren entire, with all the appearance of life, for as long a period as they choose. The secret of the process by which the order of the Capuchins have thus learnt to cheat the grave of its lawful prey is not exactly known; I believe it is some sort of baking or boiling. They have always the number of forty carefully preserved; and when a death occurs in the monastery, the most ancient among the dead bodies makes way for the new-comer, and is buried. I had been told that the spectacle of these forty monks, so long departed from existence, yet still unshrouded and uncoffined, was most curious, although sufficiently appalling to render it less frequently visited than it would doubtless have otherwise been. For myself, however, it had been my lot, in my various wanderings, to see death in so many different shapes, that I could hardly shrink from any new aspect under which it might present itself, and I had therefore advanced thus far on my way to visit them. Still, I must own I was a long time of answering the pointed question of my companion: to tell the truth, there was something in his own appearance and manner which awed me considerably; and I could not help wondering what the dead monks must be, if their living brother had so little the semblance of humanity. There was a dulness in his sunken eye, a solemn expression on his livid face, half hid by the huge cowl, and something so mechanical in his every movement, that it was scarce possible not to fancy the soul itself was wanting. These were the first words he had uttered since he had suddenly appeared at my side, in obedience to the call of the superior; and now having spoken, he closed his withered lips again, as though these hollow tones were to issue from them no more, and stood motionless till I mustered up courage to pronounce an emphatic 'Vado' (I go), when he instantly stalked silently along the dark, narrow passage, and unlocked the massive portal of the chamber, whose silent inhabitants I was about to visit. The door rolled back heavily on its hinges; the ghostly monk stood back to let me pass; and as I crossed the threshold, I heard him close it behind me with a noise which echoed, as it seemed to me most ominously, from vault to vault.

I found myself in a large hall, constructed entirely of the white Maltese stone, the roof rising in the shape of a dome. It was lighted only from the top, so that although every object was perfectly distinct, the day could only penetrate within it, tempered by a kind of twilight shade. The very first breath I drew in this dead-house, made me gasp and shiver. It was not precisely cold; but there was a chill, and an undecipherable heaviness on the air, which caused a most unpleasant

sensation. It was some minutes before this feeling could be shaken off; at last I determined boldly to raise my eyes and look around. For a moment I could have fancied we had mistaken our way, and returned to that part of the vast convent which was inhabited by the living; the scene was so very similar to that I had just witnessed in the chapel above, where the vesper service was being performed. Standing upright, in niches cut in the wall, the forty monks were ranged round the room, twenty on either side of me, clothed in the complete costume of their order. At a superficial glance, they seemed all engaged in prayer; and very still and quiet they were, with their heads, from which the dark cowl was thrown back, bent slightly over their clasped hands. Alongside of each one was an inscription, giving his name, and the date of his death; and it really required some such announcement to bring to my mind the full conviction, that it was indeed on lifeless corpses I was gazing; for, except that all had the same uniform hue of dull, ghastly yellow, and the same fixity in the position of the eyes, there was nothing in their outward appearance to indicate that they had not, each one of them, a living, throbbing heart within his bosom. The flesh was firm, the limbs retained their shape, the lips their colour; the very eyelashes and nails were perfectly preserved; and the eyes themselves, though fixed, as I have said, did not look dead or rayless. It was a frightful mockery of life, because so frightfully real. I could see no difference between those mummies and their deathlike brethren up stairs; whose long confinement in the cloister, and strict adherence to the most severe of the monastic rules, have wasted their bodies, quenched the fire of their eyes, and banished all expression from their faces. But when I went nearer, in order to examine them regularly one by one, I saw that the Capuchins, who have thus the secret of triumphing over corruption, and, outwardly at least, would seem to set even death at defiance, had altogether failed in one most important point. They had preserved the bodies from decay; they had clothed them in the garments they were wont to wear; they had marvellously banished the likeness of death; the skin, the hair, the hands, were as those of living beings; but, with all their art, they had been powerless to efface from the countenance of each one of these dead men the seal which the soul had stamped thereon as it departed. All the faces wore the expression with which they had died; different according to their various temperaments, but fixed, immutable, unchangeably eloquent of the exact frame of mind in which they had separately met that awful hour. It even seemed as though, in this expressive look (the last trace of spirit petrified, as it were, on the dead face), might be read not only the record of their dying moments, but also the history of their past lives; showing how the good man, humble and sincere, had departed in peace; and how the disappointed, ambitious soul had clung to a life which years of asceticism had vainly sought to render odious. It is sufficient, however, to look only once in their faces, to lose instantaneously the effect of the delusion, which is so striking at a first glance. The imitation of life, cunning as it is, fails altogether before this palpable evidence of their having undergone the last dread trial.

The body nearest me, which was that of an old man, had a countenance which would have told its tale clearly to the most careless observer. I felt, as I gazed on his serene and placid face, that death had been to him a glad release; he had waited, he had wished for it; and when it came, he had resigned himself to its power, as a child sinks to sleep on its mother's breast. The strong lines round the shrivelled lips, the deeply-furrowed brow, the hollow eye, all told of a weary conflict past—of tears which had been very bitter, of that long struggle with sorrow which can make existence a load most gladly laid aside. But there was a sublimity of repose upon that old man's face, which life could never have known. And the next! I wish I could

forget the awful face of the next in order; but I know I never shall: the expression of that countenance will never cease to haunt me! The fierce scowl on the forehead, the eyes starting from their sockets, the lips convulsively drawn back, so as to show the sharp, white teeth firmly clenched, all told an unwillingness to die—an utter dread of dissolution, which it is frightful to think of! Here were, indeed, again the traces of a conflict, but a conflict with death itself. It was easy to see how madly, how wildly, he had struggled to retain his hold on life; and when that life escaped, it had written on his face the record of that last hour as one of most intense despair. Assuredly this man must have been a slave to the memory of some great crime, which made him so very a coward in presence of his invincible foe; or else—for he seemed too young for that—he may have had one of those morbid, restless spirits of inquiry which ever drove him to the burial-places, that he might rifle the secrets of the grave, to learn the details of the universal doom, till he was seized with a frantic horror for the individual corruption which awaited himself, such as I have known men of imaginative minds to feel. Anyway, it was a fearful face. He had fought with the King of Terrors, and been subdued, but the struggle had been a dire one; and what rendered this yet more striking, was the mock resignation with which the hands had been folded together after death. I was glad to pass on, though it was to look on a corpse which could only inspire disgust; it was so evident that this one had died even as the beasts that perish. His heavy features were full of sottish indifference: he could not have foreseen that his hour was come; or, if he did, his must have been one of those narrow, grovelling minds, too completely filled with the daily occurrences of life to wake up and look beyond it, and question eternity. Next to him was one who had expired in extreme suffering from some terrible disease: his face told of nothing save bodily pain; but so expressive was it of this, that it was scarce possible not to believe that he was even then in great agony. Again—I could have looked for ever on the face of him who stood next in the line. Where the expression on the face of the dead is beautiful, it must be infinitely more so than it ever can be while living; and in the still eyes of this corpse, in the sweet smile that brightened even that livid mouth, there was a fervour of hope and faith not to be mistaken. He was very young, and had probably been cut off in the first enthusiasm of his vocation, ere time, or the imperishable craving for human sympathy, had quenched the ardent religious fervour, which is so sincerely felt by many young novices on their first profession. I was very glad he died when he did, it was so glorious a look of triumph! Strange to say, the most unmeaning of all these faces was that of a man who had been murdered: there was a mere vacant stare of surprise in his wide, glaring eyes. The spirit seemed to have been so suddenly expelled from her mortal tenement, that she had left no trace of her passage forth. Near to this ghastly corpse stood a young man, who appeared to have fallen gently asleep, with that expression of utter weariness which is the very stamp of a broken heart.

When I had gone round about half the room, and had minutely examined the features of some twenty of this ghostly company, I was seized with a very strange hallucination. On entering into the presence of these forty monks, I had been fully aware, of course, that they were all dead, and I alone was living; and now I was equally conscious that there was some vast difference between the present state of my grisly hosts and my own; only, after I had gone from one to another, ever meeting the gaze of their meaning eyes, and gathering such volumes of eloquence from their still lips, I could almost have believed that they were all living, and I myself dead, or in a dream! It was quite time to hold some communication with the living when assailed by such fancies as these; and I turned to look for my guide, with a strong desire to enter into

conversation with him. I looked round and round in vain. I counted forty-one monks, therefore the living man must be amongst them; but the exact similarity of dress, and the motionless attitude with which he had installed himself between two of his lifeless companions, made it no easy matter to distinguish him. When I did find him out, the question with which I addressed him would have been considered passably unfeeling in more polite society; it was, if he himself would one day take his place in this strange sepulchre? 'Assuredly!' he answered, with more vivacity than he had yet displayed; 'and this one must make way for me,' he continued with a grim smile of satisfaction, at the same time dealing a light blow with his bunch of keys on the shoulder of one of the corpses, which caused the bones to rattle with a sound so horrible, that I flew to the door, and begged him to open it, that I might escape from this dreadful room. I had had quite enough of the society, certainly not enlivening, of the Capuchins, both living and dead: indeed, on the whole, I rather give the preference to the latter, for we claim no kindness with the dead; whereas, it must always be painful to come in contact with a fellow-creature so devoid of human feeling as this old man seemed to be. He afterwards conducted me through the whole of the convent, at least of that part of it to which strangers are admitted. It is very extensive, but principally remarkable from the strange sight I had witnessed. As this order is one of the most rigorous, the brotherhood is composed, for the most part, of men who have committed some crime, and flown thither for refuge from the vengeance of the law, or the yet sterner justice of their own conscience. Judging from the countenances of those I saw, I should say they had sought all mental rest in vain; but so indeed it must have been. It was scarcely possible that the quiet of the cloister should have any effect on them; for it is starting on a false principle to suppose that a man can ever escape from his own deed, be it what it may, good or bad. As soon as he has committed it, he has given it an existence, an individuality which he can never again destroy: it becomes independent of him, and goes out into the world to deal its influence in widening circles far beyond his ken.

Column for Young People.

THE HUMBLE BEE.

ON one of our summer holidays, after the bright and sunny forenoon had been spent by the young people in gardening, and various other labours, the boys showed an unusual anxiety to be off after dinner, on some secret expedition of their own. They thus anticipated our afternoon walk by several hours. At the usual time, however, we set out; and, not without some vague expectations of finding them, we took our way through a favourite and often-trodden dell, which leads to a meadow by the river side. The sun was shining brilliantly in the west, yet a soft breeze tempered the heat, and a morning shower had cooled and refreshed the green herbage, which sprang up everywhere around us. The birches, which hung on each rocky side of the dell, sent forth a grateful odour, and the beautiful red petals of the wild-roses, now in full blow, as well as the white blossoms of the bramble, and innumerable other more lowly plants, added not a little to the perfume.

'I wonder,' said Mary in the intervals of her scrambling among the rocks for the prettiest wild flowers, 'where those boys can be, or what they are about? I hope they are about no mischief; and yet the mystery they have observed regarding their expedition does not look well.'

'Oh, I should not wonder,' replies Elizabeth, 'but we shall find them with old Davie; drinking in with delight some of his stories, or chanting along with him his songs and ballads, or perhaps busily employed setting their water-wheels of rushes at the little dams and water-falls, which they have laboriously constructed. Such amusements in a sunny afternoon like this, make me wish that I were a child again.'

'I recollect well,' says Mary, 'the first time I ever heard of Robinson Crusoe was from Davie, as the good-natured old man sat down yonder in the meadow, and told us the wonderful tale, while we lay eagerly listening around him. So clear were his descriptions, that I almost thought I saw the island before me, and poor lonely Crusoe wandering on the sandy shore, startled at the print of a human footstep there. Poor, dear old Davie! many are the hours' amusement you have afforded us; I fear we have sometimes teased you, and too often wearied you. Yet we shall never forget you, and even now I have something in my basket in store for you; for your task of tending the cattle in the far-off fields must be but an irksome and lonely one at best—a cold and cheerless one too often.'

We had now passed through the narrow dell, and the grassy meadow opened up before us. It was covered with a rich, green sward, variegated with innumerable blossoms of the white and yellow clover; here and there were seen clusters of the yellow butter-cups, the daisy of all tints and sizes, and occasionally the pyramidal stem of the orchis, with its rich and curiously-shaped flowers. The sheep were busy nibbling the grass on the upper parts of the meadow, and in the more luxuriant hollows strayed the cattle, leisurely browsing in irregular groups.

'Aha!' cries Mary, 'yonder are the boys; but what in the world are they about? Henry has his jacket off, swinging it around his head, and Charles, with his head covered with his handkerchief, dances about as if he were frantic, while Davie, on his hands and knees, looks intently into the earth, as if he were seeking for hidden treasure.'

We proceeded onwards to join them, but before we had come up to the place, we were assailed, first the one, and then the others, by the large humble bees, evidently in a state of rage and irritation. They boomed round and round our heads, coming closer and closer every circle they made, and were not easily to be frightened away by any efforts of ours. The girls ran for it, and I had to use my handkerchief assiduously in self-defence. I now began to suspect the cause of all this uproar, and on coming up to the place found, as I had conjectured, that a nest of these wild-bees had been invaded. I am always averse to interfere with unnecessarily or annoy any of the 'creatures of field or flood.' This the boys were aware of, and on the present occasion they felt rather abashed. It is true they had violated no express command, and Henry pleaded that it was purely out of curiosity to see the interior and inspect the curious bee-nest, that they had thus exposed it; 'and indeed,' said he, 'had we known the danger and difficulty of the task, we would even have let it alone. We have been at least two hours engaged in digging, and in that space we have been interrupted at least fifty times, and forced to battle with the pugnacious defenders of the citadel. In these battles I am glad to say, however, that though many stings and blows have passed between us, no life has been sacrificed: the whole colony are spared, and are now dispersed, in no very pleasant mood, however, through the fields.'

'Indeed we are quite aware of that,' says Mary; 'for we have encountered not a few of them already, and they, like many other enraged beings, began blindly to wreak their vengeance on us, the first they met, instead of reserving it for you, their real disturbers.'

Taking the opportunity of this, the short dispersion of the poor, persecuted swarm, we cautiously approached to inspect the nest. The siege had been conducted, under the experienced directions of old Davie, with considerable tact. A small hole led from the surface several feet under ground, where the nest was situated. Before commencing operations, a long, pliant willow wand, peeled of its bark, had been cautiously inserted from the opening above down into the nest. Along the course of this white wand, as a guide, the assailants had dug down with their garden spades and hoes, carried with them for the purpose, till they came to the termination. The nest was an enlargement of the extremity of the narrow passage, of about eight inches in diameter. It was lined above and below with moss, and contained some dozens of rude cups of wax, slightly cemented together, some of which contained honey, and others the larvæ or young bees. Now that the invasion had been actually committed, I recommended that the whole should be again carefully covered up; and that, if they chose, they might do it in such a manner as that the future operations of the bees might be seen by us, without giving them annoyance or interrupting their labours. This, with slight directions, I left to their own

ingenuity; and we proceeded to make the circuit of the meadow, before retracing our steps homewards.

The humble bee and its habits of course occupied the greater part of our attention in our walk, and every individual bee which we saw was scrutinised with a minuteness corresponding to the interest which the subject now excited. My companions soon discovered a marked difference in the forms and colours of the various kinds which presented themselves to their notice. In the meadow-grounds we met with two distinct species—one of a large size, marked on the breast and abdomen with bright yellow stripes, and commonly known as the *Gairy* or *Brocket Bee*. To this kind belonged the nest which we had just examined. It is the only species that lives deep in the ground; sometimes the nest will be found from three to six feet deep, or rather having a slanting passage into it of this length. 'And do the bees make this long passage themselves?' I was asked. In general they do not. They take possession of the nests of the field-mouse, or any other hole or crevice which they can find. They are not bad excavators, however, when they have a mind to exert themselves. In soft ground they will form a long passage in a very short time; and when, by any means, the entrance to their nest is obstructed, they speedily clear it out, or, if this is impracticable, they make a new opening.

Another species, the *Little Brookie*, of smaller size and darker colour, often has its abode below some large stone, or in the crevice of a wall, or among a tuft of moss; but seldom goes deep into the ground, like the larger species.

'Here,' cried Henry and Charles, who had now joined us, 'is a light yellow bee, which Davie calls the *Todder Tyke*. I advise you all to take care of him, for he is a wild animal, and will fly at your head and sting if you give him the least provocation. We have seen his *byke* or nest, too; it requires no digging into, and lies often among tufts of grass, or in dried turf, or crevices of walls.' The toddler made two or three booming circles around our heads in rather a menacing manner; but meeting with no opposition, he suddenly darted, with obvious path, into the air, and was seen and heard no more.

'See what a beautiful bee is on that flower of red clover,' cries Mary; 'it looks so gentle and peaceable, that I shall go near and examine it. Its breast and back are of a deep purple hue, and the rest of its body of a bright red.'

'You need not fear, it will not fly at you,' says Henry; 'the mode of defence which it uses is to turn on its back, and present its sharp sting to its enemy. This is by far the prettiest, though not the largest, of the humble bees; and, according to a rhyme which Davie has taught us, it selects the finest honey of the whole; for, strange to say, different qualities of honey are selected by the different species of bees.'

'And pray, what is this rhyme which you have learned?'

'It is mere doggerel, but I believe, like other popular rhymes, it embodies the experience of accurate observers.

The toddler tyke ne'er has sic a good byke
As the bonny gairy bee;
But of a' the bee bykes that ever I saw,
The red bellie bears the gree.'

In our next walk to the meadow, we found the bees' byke or nest carefully repaired, and done up, by the boys and their more experienced coadjutor, in such a manner as that, by means of a small window of glass, we could look in upon the operations of the inmates without in the least disturbing them. It formed a frequent source of amusement to watch them. In sunny weather they were constantly busy and at work; in cloudy and wet days they remained in a half dormant state, clustered together among the soft, warm lining of their nest, and occasionally awaking, as it were, from their sleep; one or two in succession would pay a visit to their thimble-shaped wax-combs, for the purpose of sipping the honey with which those cups were stored.

'I perceive,' said Elizabeth, after a minute examination of the colony, 'that there are bees of various sizes here, though they have all a general resemblance in their markings and colours. Do the humble bees resemble the hive-bees in this respect?'

'They do,' I replied. 'The largest bees, of which you see several here, are the large females, corresponding to the queens of the hive-bees, only they differ in this respect, that several large females may exist in the community at one time without exciting any jealousy or contention among each other. Besides these there are another set of females of a smaller size, several dozens of common work-

ing or neutral bees, and about half a dozen to a dozen of drones or male bees. On the whole, there may be from fifty to one hundred inmates of a hive of this kind. At present there are not nearly so many as this here, but you perceive that some dozens of those cups contain young bees, which are assiduously fed from the pollen, or bee dust, carried in on the thighs of those working bees. In due time those larvae or young will add to the effective number of the colony.'

'I see two bees,' cries Mary, 'very kindly feeding some young grubs, which present their mouths to their nurses, while they not only feed them with this pollen, but apparently disgorge from their mouths a quantity of honey also.'

'These are young queens,' I replied, 'which they are thus feeding on a richer fare than what is allowed to the common workers.'

'I see two in another corner,' still continues Mary; 'a set of workers, busily employed in constructing some honey-cups. How assiduously they ply their tasks! Yet the form or finish is by no means equal to that of the six-sided combs of the hive-bee.'

'No; you must look upon these rather as rustics, who live in lowly cots in the country, and feed from rude and simple bowls. Yet you see they are contented and happy, and do not attempt anything in the way of finery. Those cups they are busy with, are destined for the reception of more young; and after they have thus served as cribs to nurse them up, they are cleared out, and filled with honey, to afford a store of food during the rainy days, when the fresh and fragrant flower-cups are not accessible.'

'But do they not require a winter store of honey?' inquired Elizabeth.

'No; the greater proportion of all those you see shall be dead before winter. It is only the large queen-mothers which survive for another season, the remainder being insects of only one year's duration. In the end of autumn you will find drones, and workers, and all, gradually drop off and disappear.'

'I recollect now,' continued Elizabeth, 'to have seen, when the chill days of autumn commence, numbers of those bees lying in a half-stupor state on the red blossoms of the thistle, or in the deep cup of the foxglove, honeysuckle, and other flowers. I fancied then that they had stupefied themselves with too much of the luscious, and perhaps narcotic juices of such flowers; but now I understand that it was the coming torpidity of death, accelerated probably by the chill of the air, and the approaching wintry blasts. But how do the queen-mothers spend the winter?'

'Sometimes they take shelter in the interior of their nests, where they sleep in a dormant and inactive state, but as frequently they retire into the first hole or crevice which they can select, such as in old stone or turf walls, or about the roots of trees, or among the moss below large stones; and in this condition they remain till spring, when, aroused by the first warm and sunny breath of that genial season, they awake from their long slumbers. Each solitary queen-bee then, alone and unaided, sets about establishing her new colony; for this purpose she selects a proper nest, if it so happens that she has forsaken that of last year, or yielded it up to another companion. She then collects soft moss to line it, begins and forms a few cups for the reception of her eggs, and thus labours on, alone and unassisted, till she in time rears up a young colony around her. Having thus produced her offspring, and amply provided for them, she dies of a good old age in her second summer. The first young bees that are produced are the workers, which are thus early required to assist in the labours of the nest. These make their appearance in May or June; the small females are produced in August; and it is a singular circumstance that they again produce the males, and males only. As in the case of the hive-bees, the grubs that are intended for workers are fed with common fare; but those that are destined to become males and females, are fed with the purest honey, or sometimes with a mixture of honey and pollen. The males are not here an idle class, like the drones of the bee-hive, but join in the labours of the field and nest, assisting the workers, which are a most industrious race, and which take charge of, and nurse and feed the young bees, taking care that a certain equable warmth may be kept up in the nest. In the intervals of all this home labour, they seize every opportunity of a sunny day, ranging the fields in quest of the purest honey, and loading their thighs with the choicest pollen from the anthers of flowers.'

'What a lesson of industry, and mutual reliance, and affection does the inspection of the humble bees' nest afford,' we exclaimed as we reluctantly gave up the inspection of those creatures, 'though seen for the twentieth time!'

ARGUIN AND ITS VICTIMS.

THOUGH discovered by the Portuguese four hundred years ago, and successively possessed by them, by the Dutch, and the French, the island of Arguin, adjacent to the western coast of Africa, was, till within a few months since, a perfect *terra incognita* to the English public. At that time circumstances of a distressing nature aroused attention to the subject; it being reported that several of our countrymen were held in captivity, and barbarously treated by the islanders. Among the most zealous advocates for the liberation of the unhappy captives was Captain Grover, whose name is so familiar to the public in connexion with the Bokhara victims. Through him we now learn some particulars respecting the island, its inhabitants, and our then suffering brethren—his information having been collected from Mr Northwood, commanding the barque *Margaret*, who was detained three weeks in captivity; from William Honey, who was kept eleven months a prisoner at Arguin, and in a neighbouring island; and from Mr Vaughan, commanding the merchant brig *Courier*.*

It appears, by the log of the brig *Courier*, that, on the 26th May 1844, the chief mate, Mr Wilson, was sent with three hands to take soundings near Arguin, and that, on approaching the shore, they saw some natives, among whom was a white man, who hailed them in English. This induced Mr Wilson to run his boat on shore, for the purpose of relieving his supposed countryman; but as he neared, the natives began to beat their captive with clubs, and it was not till the boat's muskets were levelled at their heads that they desisted, and took to their heels. The white man immediately made for the boat, and was taken on board the *Courier*. He stated that his name was Samuel Phillips, that he was a seaman belonging to the *Margaret*, of London, commanded by Captain Northwood, who, with a portion of the crew, was there in captivity, and subjected to the most cruel treatment by the natives.

Captain Vaughan immediately determined to release

his fellow-countrymen by ransom, or otherwise; and therefore brought up his ship, and anchored on the west side of the island, in four and a-half fathoms water, about a mile from the shore. Four men then appeared on the beach, and made signs for them to land. This was not complied with; and on the following morning the *Courier* got under weigh, and proceeded to the south-west point of the island, anchoring again in five fathoms water. The chief mate then landed with six men, and were kindly received by the natives, who promised to bring down Captain Northwood and the other prisoners early next day, to be ransomed. At the appointed time the natives came to the beach with Mr Northwood, who waved his hat, and requested Captain Vaughan to send a boat ashore; and accordingly the mate was again despatched with six hands, and provided with a supply of tobacco and other things, to offer in exchange for the captives. The chief was, however, not satisfied with the proposed ransom; and Captain Northwood desired the men to return to the *Courier*, and request Captain Vaughan to send everything he could possibly spare. The latter, accordingly, gave his mate in addition three or four dozen handkerchiefs, and other articles, and the crew collected among themselves twenty-five shirts. These were all put in the long-boat, under the charge of Mr Wilson and his six hands, accompanied by the cutter, with five men, all well armed. Captain Vaughan gave positive orders that they were on no account to land, but to anchor near the shore, exhibit the articles they had brought, and only to allow two or three chiefs to approach them to treat. Unfortunately these orders were disregarded, and as the islanders appeared friendly, the whole party went on shore. Captain Vaughan, seeing from his ship that about forty natives were hastening to the beach, called loudly to Mr Wilson to return on board—an order which, although it was heard, was not attended to. The islanders, as Captain Vaughan expected, fired as soon as the party landed; and the only one who escaped was Mr Barrington Daines, the second mate, who succeeded in swimming off to the ship, although desperately wounded, having received two shots in the arm, and one in the side. Mr Wilson and two men were killed, while three were dangerously wounded. William Honey received two balls in the left arm, close to the shoulder. Being considered dead, he was, with Mr Wilson and the other two men, thrown into the sea; but, revived doubtless by the salt water, had contrived to crawl to land. Captain Vaughan having only two seamen and two landsmen left in his ship, and seeing that the Arguins were preparing to attack him, slipped his cable, and was reluctantly compelled to leave his countrymen to their wretched fate.

The wounded were now carried to a small hut, where their sufferings during the night were intense. The next day, however, Captain Northwood induced the natives to dress their wounds; and though the system of surgery was rude in the extreme, it proved efficient. Indeed all the men recovered, even those whose limbs, in Europe, would have been subjected to instant amputation. After a preliminary dressing, of a somewhat novel and not very delicate character, their wounds were the next day scraped with a common knife, and cauterized with the head of a red-hot nail. They were then washed with fish-oil, which gave great relief. The sufferings of Honey were dreadful; he was burned eighteen times, and eight pieces of the main bone of his arm came away. The wound in his breast they cut out with an instrument, resembling in shape a blacksmith's shovel, while they fured out the balls with brass rods. John McDonald received three balls in the abdomen, two very severe sabre cuts on the head, by which his skull was fractured. His head and skull were scraped with a common knife twice a-day. Strange to say, the sufferings of these men seemed to afford great amusement to the women and children, who imitated their moans and cries. However, they all recovered, though, during the eleven months of their cap-

* Arguin, which has been successively a trading post of the Portuguese, Dutch, and French, and finally abandoned by the latter, with the view to the concentration of the trade at their factory on the Senegal, is situated in 20 degrees 27 minutes north, and 16 degrees 27 minutes west. It is between thirty and forty miles long, and about one mile wide. It is about eight miles from the mainland (west coast of Africa), between which and the island the water is shallow. There are three or four channels, the main having a depth of five feet. On the outer or seaward side there is, according to the positive assurance of Captains Northwood and Vaughan, and of W. Honey, from five to seven fathoms water close in-shore; a fact which is, moreover, attested by a person in Bathurst, and signed by Lloyd's agent. This is important, as a different opinion has been entertained. The island is of a whitish rock, covered with a constantly shifting sand. The northern portion is flat, but the southern rises to an elevation which admits of its being seen at a distance of thirty miles. The soil produces no wood but a small shrub, yielding a caustic juice applied medicinally by the natives. Food is brought to the island from a place fifty miles in the interior of the continent. Water is abundant and excellent, though it has the appearance of milk. Two fairs are held annually on the island, in June and December; many strangers from a distance frequent them, bringing for barter necklaces, beads, cloths, and tobacco, for which they receive dried fish and oil.

The inhabitants are about sixty in number, including women and children. Their only food is fish and fish-oil: they have neither bread nor vegetables, except a small portion of rice, which is reserved for the sick. These people are remarkably affectionate to their children, and seldom quarrel among themselves. They are strict Mohammedans in all things but their abominations, which they neglect. The people are tall and well-proportioned, and their dress simple. They go armed with musket, dagger, and scimitar; and possess six boats, including those captured from the British. The only quadrupeds on the island, exclusive of dogs and cats, are white rats. The heat is very great, though generally tempered by a breeze from the north-east; and healthiness appears to be characteristic of the island.

tivity, their only fool was fish; and they were often kept a considerable time without water, although there was abundance of it. Even the women, who among the most savage tribes show almost always some sign of compassion, appeared to take delight in their sufferings, and the little children pelted them with stones. To add to their miseries, they were in daily expectation of being sent to the mainland, and sold to perpetual slavery.

There was, however, one person who had heard of their captivity, and who was taking active measures for their deliverance; namely, Captain Isomonger, commanding the merchant brig *Africanus*, who happened fortunately to be on the coast. This gentleman possesses great influence on that part of the coast of Africa; and, on communicating the intelligence to the king of Trazara, who is very friendly to the English, this monarch immediately sent to Arguin, ordering the restoration of the captives, or threatening to send an expedition to destroy the whole tribe. Captain Northwood, and all his men who could be moved, were accordingly placed in an old fishing-boat, escorted by ten of the natives, and, after a painful voyage of nine days, were delivered over to the gallant Isomonger. Honey and his two wounded companions were left behind, and Captain Northwood did not then think there was the least chance they would survive their sufferings. However, through the exertions of the man who effected the deliverance of all, these wounded men were ordered to be delivered up, without ransom, to any European ship that would receive them. No vessel appearing to claim them, despite the efforts made at home for that purpose, they were, after eleven months of great suffering, conveyed by the Arguins themselves to the Gambia. It must appear extraordinary that these men should have been allowed to remain eleven months in this dreadful state, within eight days' run of our shore. Despite the efforts of the owners to induce government to act, some misapprehension seemed to exist; for, in reply to the urgent intreaties of the mother of William Honey, the secretary of state forwarded an extract from a despatch written by Captain Bosanquet, commanding her majesty's ship *Alert*, which states that he had communicated with one of the chiefs of Arguin, who 'stated that the three Englishmen had died of their wounds, and that they had no white prisoners.' This despatch is dated 7th November 1844, and the men were not liberated until the 1st May 1845. They arrived in London on the 3d of August. It is most unfortunate that this report should have been fully credited, as, but for the benevolent and patriotic exertions of Captain Isomonger, they would have lingered out their wretched lives upon the island.

LITERARY IMPOSITIONS.

THE Count Mariano Alberti sold to a bookseller at Ancona several unedited manuscripts of Tasso, some of which he interpolated, and others forged. In 1827, he declared himself in possession of two till then unknown poems in Tasso's handwriting; afterwards he produced four other autographs; and then a volume containing thirty-seven poems, which he offered for sale to the Duke of Tuscany, whose agents, however, declared them to be spurious and modern. He then produced a file of Tasso's letters, which were regarded as genuine; till, in 1841, when, on his property being sequestered, the whole affair proved a tissue of almost unexampled forgery.

The literary world is now very generally of the belief that that very beautiful poem, John Chaffhill's *Thealma and Clearchus*, first published by Isaac Walton (1683), was actually the production of that honest angler.

The copies of the 'English Mercury' (regarded as the earliest English newspaper) in the British Museum, have been discovered to be forgeries, and Chatterton is supposed to have been concerned in their fabrication.

At least a hundred volumes or pamphlets, besides innumerable essays and letters in magazines or newspapers, have been written with a view to dispel the mystery in which for eighty years the authorship of Junius's Letters

has been involved. These political letters, so remarkable for the combination of keen severity with a polished and brilliant style, were contributed to the 'Public Advertiser,' during three years, under the signature of Junius, the actual name of the writer being a secret even to the publisher of that paper. They have been fathered upon Earl Temple, Lord Sackville, Sir Philip Francis, and fifty other distinguished characters. At present, an attempt is again being made to prove them the productions of Mr Lauchan Maclean; but we need scarcely wish for anything like a positive or convincing result.

Some time before his death, Voltaire showed a perfect indifference for his own works: they were continually reprinting, without his being ever acquainted with it. If an edition of the 'Henriade,' or his tragedies, or his historical or fugitive pieces, was nearly sold off, another was instantly produced. He requested them not to print so many. They persisted, and reprinted them in a hurry without consulting him; and, what is almost incredible, yet true, they printed a magnificent quarto edition at Geneva without his seeing a single page; in which they inserted a number of pieces not written by him, the real authors of which were well known. His remark upon this occasion is very striking—'I look upon myself as a dead man, whose effects are upon sale.' The mayor of Lausanne having established a press, published in that town an edition called complete, with the word London on the title-page, containing a great number of dull and contemptible little pieces in prose and verse, transplanted from the works of Madame Oudot, the 'Almanacs of the Muses,' the 'Portfolio Recovered,' and other literary trash, of which the twenty-third volume contains the greatest abundance. Yet the editors had the effrontery to proclaim on the title-page that the book was wholly revised and corrected by the author, who had not seen a single page of it. In Holland some forgeries were printed as the 'Private Letters' of Voltaire, which induced him to parody an old epigram:—

Lo! then exposed to public sight,
My private letters see the light;
So private, that none ever read 'em,
Save they who printed, and who made 'em.

Steevens says, that 'not the smallest part of the work called Cibber's "Lives of the Poets" was the composition of Cibber, being entirely written by Mr Shiells, amanuensis to Dr Johnson, when his dictionary was preparing for the press. T. Cibber was in the King's Bench, and accepted of ten guineas from the booksellers for leave to prefix his name to the work; and it was purposely so prefixed, as to leave the reader in doubt whether himself or his father was the person designed.'

William Henry Ireland having exercised his ingenuity with some success in the imitation of ancient writing, passed off some forged papers as the genuine manuscripts of Shakespeare. Some of the many persons who were deceived by the imposition, subscribed sums of money to defray the publication of these spurious documents, which were accordingly issued in a handsome folio volume. But when Ireland's play of 'Vortigern' was performed at Drury Lane as the work of Shakespeare, the audience quickly discerned the cheat; and soon afterwards the clever impostor published his 'Confessions,' acknowledging himself to be the sole author and writer of these ancient-looking manuscripts.

Poor young Chatterton's forgery of the poems of Rowley, a priest of the fifteenth century, is one of the most celebrated literary impositions on record. Horace Walpole, in a letter written in 1777, says, 'Change the old words for modern, and the whole construction is of yesterday; but I have no objection to anybody believing what he pleases. I think poor Chatterton was an astonishing genius.'

In all probability the exact nature of Macpherson's connexion with what are called 'Ossian's Poems' will never be known. Although snatches of these poems, and of others like them, are *proced* to have existed from old times in the Highlands, there is no proof that the whole existed. Macpherson left what he called the original Gaelic poems to be published after his death; 'but,' says Mr Carruthers, 'they proved to be an exact counterpart of those in English, although, in one of the earlier Ossian publications, he had acknowledged taking liberties in the translation. Nothing more seems to be necessary to settle that the book must be regarded as to some unknown extent a modern production, founded upon, and imitative of, certain ancient poems; and this seems to be nearly the decision at which the judgment of the unprejudiced public has arrived.'

A species of literary imposition has become common lately, namely, placing the name of some distinguished man on the title-page as editor of a work the author of which is not mentioned, because obscure. This system, done with a view to allure buyers, is unjust towards the concealed author, if the work really merit the support of an eminent editor, for it is denying a man the fair fame that he ought to receive; and if the work be bad, the public is cheated by the distinguished name put forth as editor and guarantee of its merits. Still, however, the tardiness of the people themselves in encouraging new and unknown writers of merit, is the reason why publishers resort to this trick to insure a sale and profit.

Several ingenious deceptions have been played off upon geologists and antiquaries. Some youths, desirous of amusing themselves at the expense of Father Kircher, engraved several fantastic figures upon a stone, which they afterwards buried in a place where a house was about to be built. The workmen having picked up the stone while digging the foundation, handed it over to the learned Kircher, who was quite delighted with it, and bestowed much labour and research in explaining the meaning of the extraordinary figures upon it. The success of this trick induced a young man at Wurzburg, of the name of Rodrick, to practise a more serious deception upon Professor Berenger, at the commencement of the last century. Rodrick cut a great number of stones into the shape of different kinds of animals and monstrous forms, such as bats with the heads and wings of butterflies, flying frogs and crabs, with Hebrew characters here and there discernible about the surface. These fabrications were gladly purchased by the professor, who encouraged the search for more. A new supply was accordingly prepared, and boys were employed to take them to the professor, pretending that they had just found them near the village of Eibelstadt, and charging him dearly for the time which they alleged they had employed in collecting them. Having expressed a desire to visit the place where these wonders had been found, the boys conducted him to a locality where they had previously buried a number of specimens. At last, when he had formed an ample collection, he published a folio volume, containing twenty-eight plates, with a Latin text explanatory of them, dedicating the volume to the Prince-Bishop of Wurzburg. The opinions expressed in this book, and the strange manner in which they are defended, render it a curious evidence of the extravagant credulity and folly of its author, who meant to follow it up with other publications; but being apprised by M. Deekard, a brother professor, of the hoax that had been practised, the deluded author became most anxious to recall his work. It is therefore very rare, being only met with in the libraries of the curious; and the copies which the publisher sold after the author's death, have a new title-page in lieu of the absurd allegorical one which originally belonged to them.

ISLAND AND TOWN OF SINGAPORE.

I could say much of Singapore, for it is the pivot of the liberal system in the Indian Archipelago, and owes its prosperity to the enlightened measures of Sir Stamford Raffles. The situation is happily chosen, the climate healthy, the commerce unshackled, and the taxation light; and these advantages have attracted the vessels of all the neighbouring nations to bring their produce to this market, in order to exchange it for the manufactures of England. The extent of the island is about twenty-seven miles in length by eleven in breadth. The town stands on the south side, facing the shores of Battam, and is intersected by a salt-water stream, which separates the native town from the pleasant residences of the European inhabitants; the latter stretch along the beach, and cover a space which extends to the foot of a slight eminence on which stands the governor's house. Off the town lie the shipping of various countries, presenting a most picturesque and striking appearance. The man-of-war, the steamer, and the merchant vessels of the civilised world, contrast with the huge, misshapen, and bedizened arks of China. The awkward prahus of the Bugis are surrounded by the light boats of the island. The semi-civilised Cochin-Chinese, with their vessels of antiquated European construction, deserve attention from this important step towards improvement; and the rude prahus of some parts of Borneo, claim it from their exhibiting the early dawn of maritime adventure.—*Brooke's Journal in Borneo.*

A HYMN.

[FROM LAMARTINE'S 'HARMONIES POSTIQUES']

There is an unknown language spoken
By the loud winds that sweep the sky;
By the dark storm-clouds, thunder-broken,
And waves on rocks that dash and die;
By the lone star, whose beams wax pale,
The moonlight sleeping on the vale,
The mariner's sweet distant hymn,
The horizon that before us lies,
The crystal firmament that lies
In the smooth sea reflected dim.

'Tis breathed by the cool streams at morning,
The sunset on the mountain's shades,
The snow that daybreak is adorning,
And eve that on the turret fades;
The city's sounds that rise and sink,
The fair swan on the river's brink,
The quivering cypress' murmured sighs,
The ancient temple on the hill,
The solemn silence, deep and still,
Within the forest's mysteries.

Of Thee, oh God! this voice is telling,
Thou who art truth, life, hope, and love;
On whom night calls from her dark dwelling,
To whom bright morning looks above;
Of Thee—proclaimed by every sound,
Whom nature's all-mysterious round
Declares, yet not defines Thy light;
Of Thee—the abyss and source, whence all
Our souls proceed, in which they fall,
Who hast but one name—INFINITE.

All men on earth may hear and treasure
This voice, resounding from all time;
Each one, according to his measure
Interpreting its sense sublime.
But ah! the more our spirits weak
Within its holy depths would seek,
The more this vain world's pleasures cloy;
A weight too great for earthly mind,
O'erwhelms its powers, until we find
In solitude our only joy.

So when the feeble eye-ball fixes
Its sight upon the glorious sun,
Whose gold-embazoned chariot mixes
With ray clouds that towards it run;
The dazzled gaze all powerless sinks,
Blind with the radiance which it drinks,
And sees but gloomy specks float by;
And darkness indistinct o'ershades
Wood, meadow, hill, and pleasant glade,
And the clear bosom of the sky.

D. M. M.

RIGHT IN THE LONG-RUN.

Mankind do sooner or later make a 'good report' of things worthy to be so reported of. The world is long sometimes in estimating merit rightly, but is pretty sure in the end to accord its approbation to the deserving. Too often, it is true, the wreaths that ought to have encircled the brows of living men—the eminent of their race for mental and virtuous attainments—have been twined only for their *monumental effigies*; but once placed on these, they have preserved an imperishable freshness. Milton's bays grow greener with the touch of time. Newton's name shines like the stars with which, while he was upon earth, he held immortal converse. Nature spoke by Shakespeare when he lived, and mankind have since taken care that she shall speak by him for ever. Whence we may fairly infer that the world's ultimate judgment is in most things correct, and should be regarded by every man of sense accordingly.—*T. Cromwell.*

NOTICE.

The Editors of the Journal do not undertake to return manuscripts sent to them, or to answer questions put to them, by strangers.

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